

Jim Doyle
Governor

Roberta Gassman
Secretary



State of Wisconsin

Department of Workforce Development

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

201 East Washington Avenue
P.O. Box 7946
Madison, WI 53707-7946
Telephone: (608) 266-7552
Fax: (608) 266-1784
<http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/>
e-mail: dwdsec@dwd.state.wi.us

Thursday, September 21, 2006

Contact: Rose Lynch, DWD Director of Communications, 608-266-6753

North Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board Receives \$50,000 “GROW” Grant

Money Will Support Area Workforce Development and Economic Growth

Wisconsin Rapids – Today, Department of Workforce Development Secretary Roberta Gassman announced the North Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board will receive a \$50,000 Growing Regional Opportunities in Wisconsin (GROW) grant towards workforce development and economic growth.

“Governor Doyle’s *Grow Wisconsin* plan has been a catalyst for regional workforce and economic development, and I applaud the advancements being made by the Board,” said Secretary Gassman. “As they work with the North Central GROW Leadership group, they are working to bridge geographic boundaries and develop strong relationships with regional economic, government, education, business and labor leaders.”

GROW funding will allow the Board to expand the region’s current “North Star” study of Marathon, Wood and Portage counties to include the six additional counties of the region. The results of the expanded study will help develop regional economic and workforce development strategies for the entire nine-county region. The funding will also support the work of regional business and education leaders on workforce development approaches for specific industry clusters such as health care, transportation and forest products.

The North Central Workforce Development Board serves Adams, Forest, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Oneida, Vilas and Wood counties.

“The work of the Board will greatly complement the mission of the Governor’s Council on Workforce Investment,” said Secretary Gassman. “As we develop our workforce and increase career opportunities, we also strengthen our local economy and excite current and prospective employers.”

The GROW grants were established as part of Governor Doyle’s *Grow Wisconsin* initiative. The funds are available through the state Council on Workforce Investment and are administered by DWD. In 2005, a total of \$465,000 was granted to seven regions to cover the state. An additional \$500,000 is available in 2006 to build upon the successes of the local collaborations to continue to promote regional workforce and economic approaches throughout Wisconsin.

--end--